

Message Text

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NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07 IO-13
TRSE-00 DHA-02 CU-04 EURE-00 OMB-01 /080 W
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O R 121217Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0604
USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 13175

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/CE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV. BQG
SUBJECT: VAN WELL BRIEFS ALLIED DCM'S ON FRG/GDR
SOUNDINGS

REF: BONN 13042

BEGIN SUMMARY: FOREIGN OFFICE POLITICAL DIRECTOR
VAN WELL CONVENED ON SHORT NOTICE A MEETING WITH THE
THREE ALLIED DCM'S AUGUST 11 IN ORDER TO INFORM THEM
THAT THE FRG/GDR "SOUNDINGS" WILL COMMENCE AUGUST 12.
THE BRITISH AND FRENCH APPEAR NOT TO HAVE BEEN
PREVIOUSLY INFORMED OF THE PLAN. VAN WELL DUPLICATED
SOMEWHAT THE BRIEFING GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR STOESEL
BUT LEFT OUT SOME TIDBITS (SUCH AS THE REFERENCE TO
THE TALKS ON "HUMANITARIAN" ISSUES BEING CARRIED ON
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IN "UNOFFICIAL" CHANNELS) AND ADDED OTHER DETAILS SUCH
AS A REPORTED GDR ATTEMPT, WHICH WAS UNSUCCESSFUL, TO
INITIATE ITS OWN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BERLIN SENAT
BEFORE THE FRG/GDR "SOUNDINGS" COULD GET UNDERWAY.
VAN WELL ALSO SAID THAT SCHMIDT RECEIVED HONECKER'S
RESPONSE TO HIS LETTER ON AUGUST 9. VAN WELL
SPECULATED AS TO THE REASONS FOR THE DELAYED RESPONSE

BY THE GDR AND COMMENTED ON THE LIKELY GDR INTEREST IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE ALLIED DCM'S HAD AGREED NOT TO RAISE MATTERS OF CURRENT INTEREST IN THE BONN GROUP (THE LORENZ TRIAL, ETC.) IF VAN WELL DID NOT, AND THESE TOPICS WERE NOT DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY

1. FOREIGN OFFICE POLITICAL DIRECTOR VAN WELL CONVENED A MEETING WITH THE ALLIED DCM'S THE EVENING OF AUGUST 11, THE SUBJECT OF WHICH WAS UNSPECIFIED EXCEPT THAT IT CONCERNED "BERLIN". AT THE MEETING, HE INFORMED THEM ABOUT THE PLANNED FRG/GDR "SOUNDINGS" SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AUGUST 12. VAN WELL'S INFORMATION HAD COME FROM A MEETING WITH WISCHNEWSKI, FRG PLENIPOTENTIARY IN BERLIN SPANGENBERG, BERLIN SENATOR FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS KORBER, AND FRG PERM REP TO THE GDR GAUS EARLIER THAT DAY. IT APPEARS THAT THE BRITISH AND FRENCH HAD NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY INFORMED OF THE PLANS FOR "SOUNDINGS". THERE FOLLOWS A REPORT OF VAN WELL'S REMARKS, INsofar AS THEY ARE NOT DUPLICATIVE OF WHAT WISCHNEWSKI TOLD THE AMBASSADOR ON AUGUST 8.

2. VAN WELL BEGAN BY SAYING THAT ON AUGUST 9 THE CHANCELLOR HAD RECEIVED A REPLY TO HIS LETTER SENT TO HONECKER IN EARLY JULY. VAN WELL SAID THAT HE WAS NOT INFORMED ABOUT THE PRECISE CONTENT OF THE HONECKER LETTER BUT UNDERSTANDS IT REFERRED TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS
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THE TWO GERMAN STATES NEED TO MAKE TO CSCE, DETENTE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. THE LETTER SAID THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN (THE MOMENTUM) OF THAT WHICH HAD BEEN ACHIEVED FOR STAGNATION WOULD BE A STEP BACKWARD. HONECKER EXPRESSED HIMSELF

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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IN FAVOR OF THE IMMEDIATE COMMENCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS
AND AGREED WITH THE PROCEDURAL SUGGESTION WHICH THE
FRG HAD MADE, I.E. THAT GENERAL "SOUNDINGS" BE
FOLLOWED BY FRG/GDR NEGOTIATIONS IN EAST BERLIN
BETWEEN FRG PERMREP GAUS AND THE GDR.

3. WISCHNEWSKI BELIEVES THAT AFTER THE FIRST ROUND
OF "SOUNDINGS" ON AUGUST 12 KOHL WILL RETURN TO EAST
BERLIN TO REPORT BACK, AFTER WHICH THERE WILL BE A
SECOND ROUND OF "SOUNDINGS", PROBABLY WEEK AFTER
NEXT. A MAXIMUM OF TWO ROUNDS OF "SOUNDINGS" ARE
EXPECTED. WISCHNEWSKI PLANS TO FOLLOW AS CLOSELY
AS POSSIBLE THE GUIDELINES WHICH WERE FORMULATED IN
MAY AND OF WHICH THE ALLIED AMBASSADORS WERE INFORMED
AT THAT TIME.

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4. VAN WELL EXPLAINED THE THREE CATEGORY DIVISION OF TOPICS
ALTHOUGH HE MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF
USING "UNOFFICIAL CHANNELS" FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF
"HUMANITARIAN" SUBJECTS.

5. TURNING TO BERLIN, VAN WELL SAID THAT ACCORDING
TO SENATOR KORBER, GDR REP MITDANK SOUGHT AN APPOINTMENT
WITH SENAT REP KUNZE SEVERAL DAYS AGO FOR THE PURPOSE
OF DELIVERING A COMMUNICATION TO KUNZE. SINCE IT
WAS BELIEVED THAT THIS WOULD BE A GDR PROPOSAL TO THE
SENAT TO UNDERTAKE NEGOTIATIONS, THEREBY PREEMPTING
THE FRG/GDR "UMBRELLA" FOR THE GDR/SENAT NEGOTIATIONS
WHICH THE SENAT AND FRG HOPE TO ESTABLISH THROUGH THE

"SOUNDINGS", KUNZE DELAYED HIS MEETING WITH MITDANK. KOHL HAS SINCE INFORMED WISCHNEWSKI THAT THE GDR IS ALSO READY TO TALK TO THE SENAT. THIS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BY THE FRG AND THE SENAT AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE SENAT WOULD NOT AGREE TO A KUNZE/MITDANK MEETING UNTIL AFTER THE WISCHNEWSKI/KOHL MEETING, FOLLOWING WHICH WISCHNEWSKI WOULD INFORM THE SENAT. KUNZE WILL THEN CONTACT MITDANK TO SET UP A MEETING. VAN WELL SAID THAT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO BOTH THE SENAT AND THE FRG TO PRESERVE THE UMBRELLA OF FRG REPRESENTATION OF WEST BERLIN'S INTERESTS VIS A VIS THE GDR. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW HOW THE GDR WILL REACT TO THE FRG'S RAISING THESE TOPICS IN THE "SOUNDINGS" AND SAID THAT THE GDR MAY REACT NEGATIVELY.

6. VAN WELL MENTIONED ONLY THE FOUR WELL-KNOWN BERLIN TOPICS (TELTOW CANAL, DUCKBILL, SUDGELAENDE, SPANDAU LOCK) AS THOSE WHICH THE SENAT WILL NEGOTIATE IN BERLIN. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ALLIED KOMMANDATURA WILL TAKE PLACE ON A CONTINUING BASIS. THE UK DCM ASKED CONFIDENTIAL

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ABOUT THE S-BAHN TO WHICH VAN WELL REPLIED THAT THE FRG DID NOT PLAN TO RAISE THE SUBJECT BUT ACKNOWLEDGED (WITHOUT SUGGESTING AN FRG RESPONSE) THAT THE GDR MIGHT.

7. VAN WELL SAID "VERY CONFIDENTIALLY" THAT CDU LEADER KOHL HAD BEEN INFORMED BY GAUS OF THE PLANNED "SOUNDINGS" AND THAT THE CHANCELLERY WOULD KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE OPPOSITION AS MATTERS PROCEED.

8. VAN WELL GAVE THREE POSSIBLE REASONS WHY HONECKER HAD TAKEN SO LONG TO REPLY TO SCHMIDT'S LETTER. FIRST, HONECKER PROBABLY FELT IT NECESSARY TO OBSERVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF US/SOVIET RELATIONS; IF THE US/SOVIET ATMOSPHERE COOLED, THE GDR WOULD NOT CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO THE FRG. SECOND, HONECKER WAS PROBABLY AWAITING HIS MEETING WITH BREZHNEV. FINALLY, HE WAS PROBABLY WAITING UNTIL THE BELGRADE MEETING WAS SET SINCE IT WOULD LOOK STRANGE FOR THE GDR TO REPLY TO THE FRG WHILE WRANGLING WAS STILL GOING ON IN BELGRADE. VAN WELL SAID THERE WERE PROBABLY TWO REASONS FOR THE GDR INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE FRG: TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SHOW IN BELGRADE AND TO OBTAIN NEEDED FUNDS FROM THE FRG.

9. VAN WELL NOTED THAT THE FRG PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF "SOUNDINGS" WAS NOT PLANNED

UNTIL AUGUST 12 BUT THAT IN THE LIGHT OF SPECULATION
THAT THEY WOULD GET UNDERWAY NEXT WEEK, THE GDR MISSION
IN BONN REPORTEDLY LEAKED THE FACT THAT "SOUNDINGS"
WOULD BEGIN. THIS WAS REPORTED BY
THE WIRE SERVICES SHORTLY BEFORE THE EVENING MEETING

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WITH THE DCM'S. FINALLY, VAN WELL PROMISED TO KEEP
THE ALLIES INFORMED THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS.

10. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WHETHER THE GDR WILL
INSIST ON FRG CONCESSIONS ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE
(SUCH AS THE LEGAL POSITION OF THE GDR PERMANENT
REPRESENTATION IN BONN OR THE NATIONALITY QUESTION)
RATHER THAN BEING CONTENT WITH MONEY, VAN WELL SAID
THAT THIS IS QUITE POSSIBLE. WHILE THE FRG MAY BE
ABLE TO MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS ON THE STATUS OF THE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATION (E.G. IT MAY BE ABLE TO GRANT
CERTAIN OF THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES PROVIDED
FOR IN THE VIENNA CONVENTION "AS IF" THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATION WERE A DIPLOMATIC MISSION) THERE IS
NO POSSIBILITY OF FRG FLEXIBILITY ON THE NATIONALITY

QUESTION.
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11. COMMENT: BEFORE THE MEETING, THE THREE DCM'S MET AT THE UK EMBASSY AND SPECULATED AS TO THE TOPIC OF THE MEETING. SINCE IT WAS CONSIDERED LIKELY THAT THE PURPOSE WOULD BE TO INFORM THE ALLIES ABOUT THE "SOUNDINGS", THE BRITISH DCM FAVORED RAISING OTHER CURRENT BERLIN TOPICS (LORENZ TRIAL, BAUM STATEMENT, MAIHOFFER VISIT) WITH VAN WELL. THE US AND FRENCH DCM'S WERE COOL TO THE IDEA AND THE SUBJECT WAS NOT MENTIONED.
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